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Book Reviews.

Principles and Ideals for the Sunday School. By PROFESSORS ERNEST DEWITT BURTON and SHAILER MATHEWS, of the University of Chicago. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1903. Pp. 207. \$1.

This book is a product of the ripe experience of the authors as Bible students and teachers, both in university work and in the Sunday school. We might therefore expect an unusual combination of scholarly outlook upon the problems discussed, and of practical skill in handling them; and we are not disappointed. Every chapter is full of stimulus to the larger and better views of Sunday-school work, as well as suggestions for getting these views put into practice.

The book is divided into two parts, the first being devoted to "The Teacher," and the second to "The School." Part I discusses the following topics: "The Purpose of the Sunday School," "The Teacher as a Student," "The Influence of the Teacher's Study upon Himself," "The Basis of Authority in Teaching," "Methods of Conducting a Class," "Method as Determined by the Subject-Matter of Study," "How to Induce a Pupil to Study," "The Teacher and the Religious Life of the Pupil," and "The Pastor as a Teacher of Teachers." Part II discusses: "The Requirements of a Graded School," "The Construction of a Graded Curriculum," "Examinations in the Sunday School," "The Organization of the Graded School," "The Sunday-School Library," "Sunday-School Benevolence," "The Function of a Sunday-School Ritual," and "The Teaching Ministry." These titles indicate in themselves how comprehensive a book the authors have given us, how pertinent to current interests in religious educational circles, and how practically helpful to every branch of Sunday-school instruction.

Analyzed more in detail, the interest of this book, as of all books upon education, whether religious or other, centers mainly in three things: (1) What aim does it establish for education? (2) What kind of curriculum does it propose? and (3) What methods does it suggest? The aim of religious education for the Sunday school here set up is illustrated in the following quotations from the opening chapter: "The Sunday school is essentially a school, an educational institution, and its central task is the study and teaching of the Bible." "The *teaching* of the Sunday school

must aim directly at the acquisition of knowledge of the Bible on the part of the pupil." These quotations, however, express only the more immediate, or proximate, aim. The ultimate aim is thus defined: "The *teaching* of the Sunday school must seek as its ultimate aim the conversion of the pupil and his development in Christian character." It is probable that this conception of the aim of Sunday-school work will be entirely acceptable to those who regard religious education from the point of view of professional students and teachers of the Bible. It is doubtful, however, if it will be acceptable to those educators who are not professional students or teachers of the Bible. There is a very large number of secular educators and others who believe that other culture-material should be co-ordinated with the Bible in Sunday-school programs. By this is not meant the use of such material for illustrative or supplementary purposes, but for the moral and religious content it possesses. Nor is it quite certain that "the conversion of the pupil and his development in Christian character," as generally understood, should be made a conscious aim in Sunday-school teaching. The average teacher who believes this will interpret it somewhat narrowly, it is to be feared, and will reveal his purpose to his pupils. Now, the law of indirect suggestion holds here as perhaps nowhere else. My own experience with boys of the high-school and college grade of intelligence convinces me that a teacher who goes at these boys to "convert" them and develop them in Christian character will succeed in doing neither the one nor the other.

The curriculum here proposed, as may be inferred from the aim already stated, is limited to Bible material. Granted the advisability of such a limitation, it is all that could be desired. The Bible material suggested and the order of arrangement are in keeping with the best current scholarship. But here, again, we may raise the question as to whether we can much longer limit our religious culture material to the Bible. Shall we never explicitly recognize what is implied everywhere in the best thought of civilization, viz., that history, literature, art, and science are spiritual things, in essence, and as such have their religious and moral messages for human souls? Is it not time that children, who very largely draw their intellectual and moral life from these six days in the week, should be helped to discover in them a religious meaning and inspiration also? And if these questions be pertinent, where else can the child be thus religiously adjusted to the larger spiritual process more fittingly than in the Sunday school? May it not happen that the current destructive, or reconstructive, biblical scholarship itself will sometime compel us to seek standards of infallible spiritual guidance for our children that shall reflect a larger consensus

of human experience than is represented in biblical truth alone? The writer believes that a considerable number of the readers of this book will regret that the authors have not, in this respect, interpreted more accurately the signs of the times.

The discussion on methods is all that could be desired. The advantages and disadvantages of the various ways of representing the subject-matter of instruction are pointed out. Teachers in Sunday schools have here an excellent guide as to what to do and what not to do.

In general, the book is excellently adapted for its purposes. Barring the exceptions above considered, which are certainly debatable, it marks a distinct advance in manuals for the practical guidance of Sunday-school workers.

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Hartford, Conn.

The Kingdom of God in Israel: A Course of Lessons in the Old Testament. First and Second Quarters. Edited by DWIGHT M. HODGE, D.D., FREDERIC W. PERKINS, and J. FRANK THOMPSON. Boston: Universalist Publishing House, 1903. Pp. 1-70, 71-132.

The problem of preparing Sunday-school studies based on the scientific and historical interpretation of the Scripture writings is agitating a good many thoughtful minds. Its difficulty is equaled only by its necessity. Two things must be borne in mind; first that the final aim of Sunday-school teaching is the impartation of vital religious and ethical truth; and, second, that such truth in the Old Testament must emerge, not from the ingenious use of isolated incidents, but rather from the connections and developments of the history, with which the divine movement marches. The divine teaching is through life and experience, not through "theophanies."

We have in these two pamphlets one of the current efforts to improve on the older methods of teaching. It is welcome, as is any honest attempt to solve the problem of the hour in this field. It is a painstaking effort, gathering into small compass a mass of information, very well arranged and analyzed. The statement is made at the outset that each lesson has been selected, not for its importance in the history, but for its significance as enforcing some truth in the kingdom of God. The danger that lurks in this plan is the old one of using incidents rather than historical developments, and thereby failing to get hold of the real divine movement. The fur-